

**STATEMENT OF STANLEY MICKUS  
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS  
CROSS SOUND FERRY SERVICES, INC.  
IN SUPPORT OF R.B. NO. 5289**

Sen. Maynard, Rep. Guerrero, ranking members and members of the Transportation Committee. My name is Stan Mickus and I am the Director of Public Affairs for Cross Sound Ferry Services and I am submitting this testimony in support of Raised Bill No. 5289 AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE CONNECTICUT PORT AUTHORITY.

Cross Sound Ferry is one of the largest vehicle and passenger ferry systems in the U.S. In 2013, we transported just over 1.1 million passengers and over 430,000 vehicles including commercial trucks and tractor trailers between New London and Orient Point, Long Island. We operate year-round service with as many as 58 arrivals and departures daily. We also operate seasonal high-speed passenger only ferry service to Block Island from New London. In 2013, this service carried over 100,000 passengers between these two points. We operate a fleet of nine vessels, seven vehicle and passenger ferries and two high-speed passenger-only vessels. We employ over 300 people during our peak operating season and over 225 year round. Our ferry terminal in downtown New London is the largest component of the City's multi-modal transportation center accounting for approximately 75% of all passengers coming through the transportation center which also includes rail, bus and taxi services and a 1000 car parking garage across the street not directly connected to the transportation modes.

In 2013, we experienced a modest increase in ridership in both services but both are still well below levels experienced prior to the recession. Both services are operating with excess capacity.

One of the recommendations coming out of the State's Deep Water Port Strategy Study is to "Protect and Enhance Connecticut's Private Ferry Services." The study identified that the U.S. EPA estimates greenhouse gas benefits of approximately 4-6 cents for every mile of reduced passenger vehicle travel. This figure does not take into account the congestion

benefits of taking cars and trucks off of I-95. The Connecticut DOT Policy and Planning Department calculated that based on present use data, use of Cross Sound Ferry's New London – Orient Point service to get to a central location on Long Island saves approximately 58,929,327 vehicle miles traveled annually. This accounts for more than \$3.5 million annually in greenhouse gas benefits.

As the traffic burden on I-95, 395 & 91 grows, travelers should be encouraged to utilize alternative modes of transportation such as ferries. The creation of a Connecticut Port Authority assembled properly with representation from the industry promoting maritime interests should have as its mission to promote interstate ferry travel as a cost-effective and environmentally-friendly alternative to the roadways for both passenger vehicles and heavy commercial trucks. The State has begun the process by installing some temporary signage on the approaches to the Gold Star Bridge on I-95 and a stand-alone sign on I-395 alerting travelers of the "L.I. Ferry." We appreciate this recognition and understand more permanent signage will be placed along both Interstates this spring alerting travelers of the "alternate route" by ferry. Thank you. Appropriate interstate signage for ferries as alternate routes is a must along with having the ferry routes posted on state maps, websites and mobile applications as a way to promote awareness of ferry travel.

As a carrier of large commercial vehicles, heavy trucks including tractor-trailers, we support the Port Study's recommendation that "Cross Sound Ferry could contribute to moving freight between New England and Long Island, taking trucks off of I-95. An incentive program recognizing the public benefits of doing so may be appropriate." With our vessels running at just over 50% capacity on a year-round basis and having the ability to add trips, expand schedules short term and procure new vessels long term, Cross Sound Ferry is capable of meeting the demand for increased commercial truck traffic. To that end we are having discussions with carriers about what sort of incentives might work in their logistics models.

A Connecticut Port Authority with a clear mission of promoting and supporting ferry transportation should be an advocate for the maritime industry to bolster Connecticut's economy.